

UNCLASSIFIED

MEX-4/1

UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT

Memorandum

TO : RPA - Mr. Jamison

DATE: June 6, 1961

FROM : CMA - Edwin E. Vallon

SUBJECT: Mexican Request for Minesweepers

The Mexican Naval Attaché has discussed with the Navy the acquisition of 10 minesweepers on an "as is where is" basis. Your office asked for our comments and we in turn asked for recommendations from Ambassador Mann. He has replied that he perceives no objection to the possible sale.

The Mexicans state that they desire to use the ships for patrol duty. The acquisition of these ships may enhance Mexico's ability to seize American flag shrimp vessels fishing illegally but I do not consider the possible use of these minesweepers against American flag shrimp boats a sufficient basis for disapproving the Mexican request.

The vessels would probably also be used to enforce Mexican revenue laws and prevent smuggling. In addition, the ships might be useful in surveillance type activity contemplated in the Caribbean security arrangements. I am not hopeful at all that Mexico would enter into any bilateral arrangements with the United States toward that end, but Mexico might on its own increase its surveillance activities.

I would suggest, however, that your office explore with Defense and Navy whether these vessels are needed in connection with the proposed Caribbean security arrangements. If so, countries willing to participate in such arrangements should receive first consideration. It may also be that South American countries which have shown a greater disposition to cooperate with the United States in defense arrangements are in need of this type vessel.

If there are no higher priority requirements elsewhere, then I have no objection to the sale of ten minesweepers to Mexico.

ARA:CMA:RMSayre

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Pls. discuss with
EAL and WJB
also

605 -
I certainly think we should
jump at this one - both because of
the fishing seizures and - also
because of Mexican attitude
in general. Let's please
recommendation
fast

11/15

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